



PRESS RELEASE

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Pennsylvania's August 1, 2006 Crop Forecast

HARRISBURG, PA, Aug 14, 2006 --- Based on August 1, 2006 forecasts for yield and production, the **Keystone state's** farmers expect to produce more corn for grain, oats, barley, winter wheat, soybeans, alfalfa and other dry hay, burley tobacco, pears, and peaches than last year. Production is expected to be below last year for Southern Maryland and Pennsylvania Seedleaf type tobaccos, apples, and grapes according to the Pennsylvania office of USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS).

Corn for grain acreage for harvest, at 940,000, is down 20,000 acres from last year. Based on crop conditions as of August 1, corn yield is forecast at 135 bushels per acre, which is 13 bushels per acre more than last year's yield. The corn for grain production of 126.9 million bushels is 8 percent more than last year.

Oats acreage for harvest, at 110,000, is unchanged from last year. Based on crop conditions as of August 1, the oat yield is forecast at 62 bushels per acre, which is up 2 bushels from the July 1 forecast and up 7 bushels from last year's final yield. The resulting oat production of 6.82 million bushels would be 13 percent above last year. Barley acreage for harvest, at 48,000, is 1,000 acres more than 2005. Barley yield is forecast at 75 bushels per acre, up 1 bushel per acre from the July 1 forecast, and up 3 bushels from a year ago. Barley production is expected to be 3.60 million bushels, 6 percent above last year's production. Winter wheat acres harvested totaled 150,000, which is 3 percent more than last year. The August 1 winter wheat yield is forecast at 57 bushels per acre, up 6 bushels per acre from the July 1 forecast and up 3 bushels from the final yield for 2005. The resulting winter wheat production of 8.55 million bushels would be 9 percent above last year.

Soybean acreage for harvest is set at 450,000, up 30,000 acres from last year. The expected yield of 42 bushels per acre is up 1 bushel from 2005. Production is set at 18.9 million bushels, up 10 percent from last year.

Alfalfa acreage harvested for dry hay is estimated at 520,000, up 10,000 acres from 2005. As of August 1, yield is forecast at 3.20 tons per acre, up 0.6 ton per acre from last year. The resulting production, at 1.7 million tons, is 25 percent more than last year. All other hay acres harvested for dry hay is estimated at 1,130,000, up 40,000 acres from last year. The expected yield as of August 1 of 2.10 tons per acre is up 0.2 ton per acre from 2005. Total production, at 2.37 million tons, is 15 percent more than 2005.

Light air-cured burley tobacco acres for harvest are estimated at 5,500. This is up 3,300 acres from the 2,200 acres of burley tobacco harvested last year. The yield for burley tobacco is forecast at 2,200 pounds per acre, unchanged from a year ago. Southern Maryland-type tobacco acres for harvest are estimated at 1,100, down 400 acres from last year. The yield is forecast at 2,100 pounds, which is up 100 pounds from the 2,000 pounds per acre produced in 2005. Production is estimated at 2.31 million pounds, which is 23 percent less than 2005. Pennsylvania seed-leaf tobacco acreage, estimated at 1,300, is unchanged from last year. The forecast yield of 2,150 pounds is 50 pounds below 2005. Production, at 2.80 million pounds, is 2 percent less than last year.

Based on August 1 conditions, the state's apple crop is expected to total 450 million pounds, down 13 percent from last year's 515 million pounds. Pear production, at 5,200 tons, is up 148 percent from last year. Grape production of 78,000 tons is down 13 percent from a year earlier. Peach production is forecast at 28,500 tons, up 7 percent from last year's production.

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United States: Corn production is forecast at 11.0 billion bushels, down 1 percent from last year, and 7 percent below 2004. Based on conditions as of August 1, yields are expected to average 152.2 bushels per acre, up 4.3 bushels from last year. If realized, the yield would be the second highest and production would be the third largest on record. Forecast yields across the Great Plains and western Corn Belt are at or below last year as scarce precipitation and above normal temperatures depleted soil moisture levels and caused crop conditions to decline. Expected yields are generally higher than last year in the eastern corn Belt and Ohio Valley as frequent rainfall and near normal temperatures throughout much of the growing season helped maintain adequate moisture.

Soybean production is forecast at 2.93 billion bushels, down 5 percent from 2005, and down 6 percent from 2004. Based on August 1 conditions, yields are expected to average 39.6 bushels per acre, down 3.7 bushels from the record high U.S. yield set last year. Yields are lower than 2005 throughout the Great Plains, the western Corn Belt, and the Gulf Coast states, while yields are expected to remain unchanged or increase in the Ohio Valley, Arkansas, Missouri, and the Atlantic Coast states. Area for harvest, at 73.9 million acres, remains unchanged from June, but is up 4 percent from 2005.

The final winter wheat production forecast is 1.28 billion bushels, up slightly from last month, but 14 percent below 2005. Area harvested for grain totals 31.1 million acres, unchanged from last month, but down 8 percent from last year. The U.S. yield is forecast at 41.2 bushels per acre, up 0.1 bushels from July 1.

Oat production for the 2006 crop year is forecast at 107 million bushels, 3 percent below the July 1 forecast, and 6 percent below last year's 115 million bushels. If realized, this would be the lowest production on record. The forecasted yield is 56.3 bushels per acre, down 1.6 bushels from July 1, and down 6.7 bushels from 2005. Growers expect to harvest 1.91 million acres for grain, up 5 percent from last year.

Barley production for 2006 is forecast at 183 million bushels, 14 percent below 2005, four percent below the July 1 forecast, and the lowest production since 1936. Based on August 1 conditions, producers expect to harvest an average of 61.2 bushels per acre, down 3.6 bushels from last year and 2.2 bushels below last month. Area harvested, at 2.99 million acres, is down 9 percent from 2005 and the lowest since 1885.

Production of alfalfa and alfalfa mixtures for dry hay is forecast at 71.2 million tons, down 6 percent from last year. Yields are expected to average 3.18 tons per acre, down 0.20 ton from 2005. Harvested area is 22.4 million acres, unchanged from June, but up fractionally from last year.

Production forecast of all other dry hay for 2006 is 71.1 million tons, down 5 percent from 2005. Based on August 1 conditions, yields are expected to average 1.77 tons per acre, down 0.14 ton from last year. If realized, the yield would be the lowest since 1990. Harvested area, at 40.3 million acres, is unchanged from June, but up 3 percent from the previous year.

All tobacco production for 2006 is forecast at 745 million pounds, up 15 percent from 2005 when acreage and production decreased significantly due to the tobacco buyout. However, production is still 15 percent below 2004 when tobacco quotas were in place. Area for harvest is forecast at 334,480 acres, 12 percent above last year. Yields for 2006 are expected to average 2,228 pounds per acre, 57 pounds greater than 2005.

The nation's apple production is forecast at 9.62 billion pounds, down 2 percent from last year, and 8 percent below 2004. Peach crop forecast is estimated at 1.05 million tons, down less than 1 percent from the July forecast and 11 percent below 2005. All pear production for 2006 is forecast at 835,310 tons, up 1 percent from last year, but 5 percent below 2004. Grape production is forecast at 6.72 million tons, down 14 percent from 2005, but 8 percent above the 2004 season.

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